



BILLING CODE: 3290-F6

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE

Request for Comments Concerning an Environmental Review of the Proposed Environmental Goods Agreement

AGENCY: Office of the United States Trade Representative

ACTION: Notice of intent to conduct an environmental review of the proposed Environmental Goods Agreement and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), through the Trade Policy Staff Committee (TPSC), is initiating an environmental review of the Environmental Goods Agreement (EGA), a plurilateral trade agreement currently being negotiated among 17 members of the World Trade Organization (WTO), including the United States. The TPSC invites written comments from the public on the topics that should be included in the scope of the EGA environmental review, including potential positive or negative environmental effects that might result from the trade agreement. The TPSC also welcomes public views on appropriate methodologies and sources of data for conducting the review.

DATES: Comments should be submitted on or before [45 days after publication], 2015, to be assured of timely consideration by the TPSC.

ADDRESSES: Public comments should be submitted electronically to www.regulations.gov, docket number USTR-2015-0021. If you are unable to provide submissions at www.regulations.gov, please contact Ms. Yvonne Jamison (202-395-3475) to arrange for an alternative method of transmission.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Questions regarding the submission of comments in response to this notice should be directed to Ms. Yvonne Jamison at (202) 395-

3475. Questions concerning the environmental review should be addressed to Mr. Seth Patch at (202) 395-7320.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

1. Background Information

On March 21, 2014, USTR notified Congress of the President's intent to enter into negotiations for a WTO Environmental Goods Agreement with an initial group of 13 trading partners.

Seventeen WTO members are presently participating in the EGA negotiations: Australia, Canada, China, Costa Rica, the European Union, Hong Kong, Iceland, Israel, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Norway, Singapore, Switzerland, Chinese Taipei, Turkey, and the United States

Through notices in the *Federal Register* and a public hearing (held June 5, 2014, in Washington, DC), the TPSC invited the public to provide written comments and/or oral testimony regarding

U.S. interests and priorities with respect to the proposed agreement (see 79 *Fed. Reg.* 17637, 79 *Fed. Reg.* 74803, and 80 *Fed. Reg.* 4332), including products to be included for tariff

elimination. Additional information about the proposed EGA can be found at

<https://ustr.gov/trade-agreements/other-initiatives/environmental-goods-agreement> and

[https://ustr.gov/about-us/policy-offices/press-office/fact-sheets/2014/July/WTO-EGA-](https://ustr.gov/about-us/policy-offices/press-office/fact-sheets/2014/July/WTO-EGA-Promoting-Made-in-America-Clean-Technology-Exports-Green-Growth-Jobs)

Promoting-Made-in-America-Clean-Technology-Exports-Green-Growth-Jobs. Public comments on environmental issues submitted in response to prior notices (80 *Fed. Reg.* 17637, 79 *Fed. Reg.* 74803, and 80 *Fed. Reg.* 4332) requesting comments from the public regarding the EGA will be taken into account in preparing the environmental review and do not need to be resubmitted.

2. Environmental Review

USTR, through the TPSC, will conduct an environmental review of the agreement consistent with Executive Order 13141 (64 *Fed. Reg.* 63169) and its implementing guidelines (65 *Fed. Reg.*

79442). The purpose of environmental reviews is to ensure that policymakers and the public are informed about reasonably foreseeable environmental impacts of trade agreements (both positive and negative), to identify complementarities between trade and environmental objectives, and to help shape appropriate responses if environmental impacts are identified. Reviews are intended to be one tool, among others, for integrating environmental information and analysis into the fluid, dynamic process of trade negotiations. USTR and the Council on Environmental Quality jointly oversee implementation of the Executive Order and its implementing guidelines. USTR, through the TPSC, is responsible for conducting the individual reviews. Additional background information and examples of prior environmental reviews are available at: <https://ustr.gov/issue-areas/environment/environmental-reviews>.

3. Requirements for Submissions

Persons submitting comments must do so in English and must identify (on the first page of the submission) “Comments Regarding the EGA Environmental Review.” In order to be assured of consideration, comments should be submitted by [45 days after publication], 2015. In order to ensure the timely receipt and consideration of comments, USTR strongly encourages commenters to make on-line submissions, using the www.regulations.gov website. To submit comments via www.regulations.gov, enter docket number USTR–2015–0021 on the home page and click “search.” The site will provide a search-results page listing all documents associated with this docket. Find a reference to this notice and click on the link entitled “Comment Now!” (For further information on using the www.regulations.gov website, please consult the resources provided on the website by clicking on “How to Use This Site” on the left side of the home page).

The www.regulations.gov website allows users to provide comments by filling in a “Type Comment” field, or by attaching a document using an “Upload File” field. USTR prefers that comments be provided in an attached document. USTR prefers submissions in Microsoft Word (.doc) or Adobe Acrobat (.pdf). If the submission is in an application other than those two, please indicate the name of the application in the “Type Comment” field.

For any comments submitted electronically containing business confidential information, the file name of the business confidential version should begin with the characters “BC”. Any page containing business confidential information must be clearly marked “BUSINESS CONFIDENTIAL” on the top of that page. Filers of submissions containing business confidential information must also submit a public version of their comments. The file name of the public version should begin with the character “P”. The “BC” and “P” should be followed by the name of the person or entity submitting the comments. Filers submitting comments containing no business confidential information should name their file using the name of the person or entity submitting the comments.

Please do not attach separate cover letters to electronic submissions; rather, include any information that might appear in a cover letter in the submission itself. Similarly, to the extent possible, please include any exhibits, annexes, or other attachments in the same file as the submission itself, not as separate files.

As noted, USTR strongly urges submitters to file comments through the www.regulations.gov website if at all possible. Any alternative arrangements must be made with Ms. Jamison in advance of transmitting a comment. Ms. Jamison may be contacted at (202) 395–3475. General information concerning USTR is available at www.ustr.gov.

Comments will be placed in the docket and open to public inspection, except business confidential information. Comments may be viewed on the www.regulations.gov website by entering the relevant docket number in the search field on the home page.

Edward Gresser,

Acting Chair, Trade Policy Staff Committee

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